



NEWS

**For Immediate Release
November 5, 2004**

Draft *Environmental Impact Statement* for Moab, Utah, UMTRA Project Site Available for Public Comment

(Grand Junction, Colorado)—The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Environmental Management announces the availability of the document, *Remediation of the Moab Uranium Mill Tailings, Grand and San Juan Counties, Utah, Draft Environmental Impact Statement* (EIS) for the Moab, Utah, Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (UMTRA) Project Site, for public comment. The draft EIS provides information concerning the potential environmental impacts of remediating the Moab Project UMTRA Site and vicinity properties.

The Moab Project Site is a former uranium ore processing facility located about 3 miles northwest of the city of Moab in Grand County, Utah, on the west bank of the Colorado River at the confluence with Moab Wash. The site encompasses approximately 400 acres and includes a 130-acre uranium mill tailings pile that occupies much of the western portion.

DOE is proposing to clean up surface contamination and implement a ground water compliance strategy to address contamination that resulted from historical uranium ore processing at the site. DOE has prepared a draft EIS to fulfill the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirement of considering the full range of reasonable alternatives and associated environmental effects of significant federal actions.

Twelve federal, tribal, state, and local agencies have participated as cooperating agencies with DOE in the development and preparation of the draft EIS. In this document, DOE analyzes the potential environmental impacts of both on-site and off-site remediation and disposal alternatives involving surface materials and ground water contamination. The No Action alternative is also analyzed to provide a basis for comparison to the action alternatives and is required by NEPA regulations.

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The on-site disposal alternative would involve placing contaminated site materials and materials from vicinity properties on the existing tailings pile and stabilizing and capping the tailings pile in place. For the off-site disposal alternative, DOE would remove contaminated materials from the former processing facility and vicinity properties and transport them to another location for permanent disposal. The draft EIS evaluates three locations in Utah as off-site disposal alternatives. Under either on-site or off-site disposal of surface contamination, the proposed ground water remediation would be essentially the same except for the duration of the action.

DOE has not identified a preferred alternative in the draft EIS; a preferred alternative will be included in the final EIS after consideration of public comments, the information provided in the draft EIS, and factors relevant to the decision.

DOE will host public meetings to discuss the draft EIS during the week of January 24, 2005. Further details about these meetings will be made available at the beginning of January.

Reference copies of the draft EIS will be placed in the Grand County Public Library, Blanding Branch Library, and the White Mesa Ute Administrative Building. A copy will also be available on the Internet at <http://gj.em.doe.gov/moab/> and in the DOE Public Reading Room in Grand Junction, Colorado. Copies may be requested by contacting DOE toll free at 1-800-637-4575.

DOE will provide a 90-day public review and comment period, and welcomes comments and suggestions from all interested parties on the information presented in the draft EIS. Comments will be accepted through February 18, 2005.

Mail comments to:
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U.S. Department of Energy
2597 B 3/4 Road
Grand Junction, CO 81503

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